Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1589 - January 25, 2008

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1589 with a release date of Friday, January 25th 2008 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Presidential hopeful Mitt Romney explains his remark about ham radio made two years ago. We have the exclusive report. Also, Amateur Radio saves a lost family in the Swiss Alps and a new worlds record in the 241 Gigahertz band. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1589 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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HAM RADIO IN POLITICS: CANDIDATE MITT ROMNEY AND HAM RADIO

Republican presidential contender Mitt Romney says that he never intended to demean Amateur radio in n exchange with a television reporter two years ago. This, as the debate over his comments flares anew on the ham bands and on hobby radio blogging websites nationwide. Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Wilbanks was the one who contacted Mitt Romney and asked him to explain:

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It all began during a televised Town Meeting that aired on November 16th of 2005 on segment 2 of WCVB television's "When Disaster Strikes" The program featured public safety and volunteer organization officials from across Massachusetts. Moderator Natalie Jacobson had asked Governor Romney questions about communications interoperability, and communication without commercial power.

During the exchange Jacobson commented '...so you don't see yourself getting down to ham radio operators?...' The then governor replied: "No, we don't need to deal with ham radio operators. We have power systems that allow us to speak with one another and to manage our response."

Hams across Massachusetts and eventually across the nation only seemed to hear the words "we don't need to deal with ham radio operators" and reacted negatively. This, even though the remark was taken out of context. Most hams never bothered to find out what really transpired even though the entire program has been available on the WCVB website since it was broadcast. Instead they relied on inaccurate and incomplete information being passed along on the World Wide Web.

The issue eventually died away only to reappear on the ham radio blogs in recent weeks as a result of Romney seeking the Republican party's nomination to run for the U-S presidency. For example, in the Talk and Opinion area of QRZ.com there is a subject titled: "Do we want a President who hates ham radio?" Reading the ongoing discussion shows that few of those taking part have ever have seen or heard the show in question,

So on Friday, January 18th I decided to see if Mitt Romney would be willing to address this issue in a clear an concise manner. So I wrote him the following e-mail:

" Mr. Romney,

In November of 2005 in a televised town meeting you commented that in an emergency you "don't need to deal with ham radio operators".

My family lived in the greater New Orleans area when Hurricane Katrina hit. Hams made huge contributions down here. I am also a licensed ham, AE5DW.

My question is simple: Tell me how I can support you if you don't support us?
Thank you.

Don Wilbanks, AE5DW"

I did not know if I would get a response or not, but felt it was worth the effort to find out if Mitt Romney even remembered the incident and if so, what he might have to say. On Tuesday, January 22nd I received the following response via email in which the key paragraph read:

"Dear Don:

Thank you for following up with me on the responsibility of Ham Radio Operators. The exchange with Natalie Jacobsen was meant to imply that we need to strengthen our emergency response infrastructure, rather than demean the important role I recognize that Ham Radio Operators play around our country. I hope this will clear up any confusion. Again, thank you for contacting me. "

Whether the response came directly from Mitt Romney or one of his aids is hard to say. The reference made to WCVB's Natalie Jacobsen would tend to indicate that whoever actually wrote the response was aware of what transpired during the on-the-air exchange.

And as I mentioned earlier, the entire segment of the program "When Disaster Strikes" can be seen at the WCVB website. The exact U-R-L is www.thebostonchannel.com/video/5334306/index.html

Now living in Picayune, Mississippi, I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW.

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Mitt Romney's response also warrants the question as to where all of the other candidates -- both Democrats and Republicans stand on issues important to ham radio operators. We will be looking into this in future Amateur Radio Newsline reports. (AE5DW, ARNewsline(tm))

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RESCUE RADIO: HAM RADIO OPERATOR HELPS RESCUE STRANDED FAMILY IN THE SWIS ALPS

Six Ukrainian immigrants seeking asylum see have been rescued after getting lost in the snowy Swiss Alps and an unidentified ham radio operator is being credited with saving their lives.

The mother and her five children ran into difficulties while trying to cross illegally from Italy into Switzerland. They were saved late on after a Swiss citizen described as local radio amateur picked up their distress call made by the mother using a child's walkie-talkie.

The mother and her children, aged nine to 21, got stranded near Monte Lema, a 5,250 foot high mountain in the area of Ticino. According to regional police spokesman Marco Bordoli the family's calls for help in broken English were picked up by an Italian amateur radio operator who then alerted the authorities.

Police found the asylum seekers at 1700 local time (1400 GMT), and they were then airlifted by helicopter.

Three members of the family were taken to hospital with frostbite. Bordoli said the Ukrainians have already asked for political asylum and that their case would be heard by the public prosecutor's office. The ham radio operator is being praised as a hero. (BBC, SwissNews.com)

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RESCUE RADIO: ACCIDENT HITS 3Y0E DXPEDITION

Problems for the DX-pedition operating from Bouveit Island. The Ohio Penn D-X newsletter has received a report that Petrus Kritzinger, 3Y0E, whose callsign is being used for the operation is occupied with an emergency situation. Word is that one of the team members has been bitten by an elephant seal and Petrus, who is the medic on the Island is currently looking after that unidentified person. Its not known how critical the bite is.

In a related development, ZS6DXB who is the Pilot station and Media Officer for the 3Y0E has announced that due to high QRM from Europe and a lot of requests from people with restricted licenses, they have moved 3Y0E operating frequency. 3Y0E is now on 14.260 MHz working split 5 to 10 kHz up the band. (OPDX)

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RADIO RECORDS: WA1ZMS AND W4WWQ GO 114 KM ON 241 GHZ

A pair of United states hams are now the likely distance holders for a contact on the 241Gigahertz band.

At 01:24 U-T-C on January 31st, Brian Justin, WA1ZMS portable 4 operating from Grid Square FM07 made contact with Peter Lascell, W4WWQ, also operating portable 4 from Grid Square EM96. That's a distance of 114.4km and beating out the old record of 79 km by 35.4 Km.

WA1ZMS says that the QSO was over 2 years in the making with several

failed attempts at even shorter distances during that time period. He says that the key to success this time was the very driest of winter air that may only take place one day a year in his part of the country. The mode used for the contact was CW. (WIA News, WA1ZMS)

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BREAK 1

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the K2SPD repeater serving Suffolk County New York.

(5 sec pause here)

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HAM RADIO POLITICS: NEW MEMERS APPOINTED TO ARRL ELECTION ETHICS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The ARRL Board of Directors held their Annual January meeting January 18th and 19th in Houston, Texas. Among other things on the agenda was the election of ARRL officers, as well as members of the Executive, Administration and Finance, and Programs and Services Committees. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in the newsroom with more:

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About the only item made public so far that will be of interest to most hams is a change in the membership of the Ethics and Elections Committee. But its not taken place as the result of the recent disqualification's of a potential candidate for office in Southern California and the public backlash that resulted. Rather, its just a normal change that occurs almost every year.

As a result there are three new Board members now sitting on the Ethics and Elections Committee. These are Director Coy Day, N5OK; Frank Fallon, N2FF, and Greg Sarratt, W4OZK.

According to an ARRL news release, the new members of the Ethics and Elections Committee are Directors not up for re-election in 2008. As per the ARRL By-Laws, this committee applies guidelines for ethical conduct by ARRL officials, determines eligibility of candidates for Director and Vice Director, certifies a nominee's eligibility to fill a Vice Director vacancy and supervises the balloting for Director and Vice Director.

A hint at what else might have discussed appears in a publication called the e-Communicator. It was sent to members in the ARRL's Southwestern Division following the meeting. In it, Director Dick Norton writes:

" The last e-Communicator's request for items to be brought up at the just concluded ARRL Board of Director's meeting resulted in requests for action to try to overturn CC&R prohibitions against antennas. Note that the ARRL already has a program attempting to do this."

Reference is then made to last years attempt. Norton concludes by stating: "It is not at all clear that such a bill is likely to ever become law, but the League is trying. A similar bill made it through one house of the Arizona state legislature in 2007, but was unable to get through the state senate."

From the Newsroom in Los Angeles, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF

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Further details on the 2008 Annual Meeting will soon be available on the ARRL Web site and in the April 2008 issue of QST. (ARRL, SW Div E-Communicator)

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ENFORCEMENT: UNLICENSED COLLEGE STATION WARNED TO STOP OPERATING

The FCC's San Diego Office has warned Mt. San Jacinto Community College in California to take an unlicensed broadcast radio station off the air.
On December 27th 2007 the regulatory agency notified the Mt. San Jacinto Community College that it was aware of a transmitter on 1620 kHz in the A-M broadcast band allegedly operating from the school. This, after an agent confirmed by radio direction finding on December 14th that the transmitter was located at the Music Building inside the Mt. San Jacinto campus.

The Commission says that its records show that no license was issued for operation of a broadcast station on 1620 kHz at that location. It warned the school that operation of radio transmitting equipment without a valid radio station authorization constitutes a violation of the Federal law. That it could subject the operator to severe penalties, including substantial monetary fines, seizure of the radio equipment, and criminal sanctions.

Mt. San Jacinto Community College was given 10 days from the date of the violation notice to respond and let the FCC know it had taken action to remove the transmitter from the airwaves. That date is now past. No word if school has responded to the notice from the FCC. (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: OPERATING WITHOUT A LICENSE BRINGS $10,000 FINE

The FCC has affirmed a $10,000 monetary forfeiture to Eliandro B. Ramos, of Boston, Massachusetts. . This, for willfully and repeatedly violating Section 301 of the Communications Act by operating on the frequency of 296.550 MHz without Commission authorization.

Back on April 26, 2007, the Commission's Boston Field Office issued the $10,000 Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture to Ramos for operating without a license. Ramos never disputed the accusations but requests a cancellation of the forfeiture based on his inability to

pay. The Commission reviewed the personal income tax returns submitted by Ramos and found that the forfeiture represents a percentage of gross income that falls within the range that has been found acceptable.

Ramos was given the usual 30 days from release of the January 16th order to pay or file a further appeal. (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: FLORIDA PIRATE BROADCASTER SHUT DOWN USING STATE LAW

An illegal Florida radio station that authorities said was on air to "glamorize and encourage criminal gangster activity" was shut down Friday afternoon January 11th. Three people were arrested in connection the underground station that played a genre known as "gangsta rap" that often features crude and offensive lyrics.

Using state laws, the Polk County Sheriff's office arrested station operator Calvin Thompson, along with disc jockey's Wesley C. Williams Jr., and Jimessia Spillman. The three were booked into the Polk County Jail, accused of one count each of unauthorized transmission and interference with a licensed radio station. The offense is a third-degree felony.

According to Sheriff Grady Judd, his office worked in partnership with the State Attorney's Office and Federal Communications Commission to shut down the illegal operation. The radio station was operating without an FCC license.

The complete story is on-line at
http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/southwest/orl-cfbriefs12_708jan12,0,2985126,print.story?coll=orl-home-utility-mult
(Florida OnLine)

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RESCUE RADIO: COLORADO TV STATION BURNS DOWN

KREX television in Grand Junction, Colorado, was destroyed by a fire early the morning of January 20th. The blaze reportedly started around nine AM. Fire fighters called their first effort defensive. That means they had to fight the fire from the outside of the building. At one point a fire fighter tried to enter the building and was blown down by force.

Four of five Grand Junction Fire Department station units were called to the scene. The cause of the fire is not known at this time, and thankfully no one has been injured. The station's General Manager says as a result of the damage, the building will likely have to be demolished.

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: DEDICATED 6 METER CARIBBEAN DXPEDITION.

Some names in the news. First up is Dennis Motschenbacher, K7BV. He is the North America Executive Vice President for the Amateur Radio Sales Division of Vertex Standard and he will be active this summer from the Caribbean in a dedicated 6 meter operation.

From June 20th to the 26th Dennis will sign portable V 3 from Caye Caulker Island, Belize. Then from June 28th and July 6th he will be portable HK0 from San Andres Island.

Dennis' equipment will be a Yeasu FT-450 with ACOM-1000 amplifier, running 1KW into a 7 element and 3 element beams. The main frequency will be 50.106.2 MHz USB with W5OZI acting as his pilot station. QSL direct only to W1JJ.

(DO NOT READ: For more information, visit his interesting Web page at www.qth.com/k7bv/caribe2008)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: GRANT MORINE W4GHM IN BOYS LIFE MAGAZINE

And words of congratulations to Amateur Radio Newsline's 2007 Young Ham of the Year Grant Morine, W4GHM. This on an article about him and scout Greg Davis appearing in the just released February 2008 issue of Boys Life magazine.

Boys Life has a circulation of 1.3 million. The magazine also provided a listing in its print edition to the YHOTY website, as well as a hyperlink on its website to www.yhoty.org.

As to W4GHM himself? According to his dad Bill, N2COP, Grant has been accepted to UNC-Chapel Hill. Meantime he is waiting to hear from Duke and the U-S Naval Academy. You can reach the on-line edition of Boys Life magazine through the link on the left side of the page at www.scouting.org (N2COP)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: 2008 INTERNATIONAL DX CONVENTION IN VISALIA.

Mark down April 25th, 26th and 27th for the 2008 International DX Convention. This year the host is the Southern California DX Club but the venue remains the Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center in Visalia, California.

Those new to ham radio may not be aware that the International DX Convention is the world's premier gathering of D-X operators that attracts the top operators from the US, Asia, Europe, Africa and Oceania and any other spot you can think of. Also on hand are the worlds top DXpedition operators to share the inside stories on how they managed to put some rare location on-the-air.

If you have even a passing interest in D-X operation, this is a show you won't want to miss. Again the dates are April 25th to the 27th at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center in Visalia, California for the 2008 International D-X Convention. More is on-line at

www.dxconvention.org. (Various)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: FORMER WORLDRADIO EDITOR LOUANN KEOGH, KB6HP, - SK

The changing of the guard in Amateur Radio continues. This with the sad news that former Editor of Worldradio Magazine, Lou Ann Keogh, KB6HP, as died.

According to Carl Schultz, W6FJ, Keogh was found in her Sacramento, California, home by her family on Thursday afternoon January 17th. Her daughter Jenny told Carl that it appeared as if she had gone peacefully.

In addition to her work at Worldradio, Keogh was a member of North Hills Radio Club in Sacramento and a frequent contributor to Amateur Radio Newsline. After her departure from Worldradio in 1997, she became a freelance manuscript editor working on a number projects including several with our producer Bill Pasternak. This includes a series currently running in the QCWA Journal titled "Geeks."

No funeral service is planned. She will be buried in the cemetery alongside her husband Ed Keogh, WB6ETN, who preceded her to the grave. According to her son Matt, the two met via ham radio. (W6FJ, ARNewsline(tm))

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: HIRAM PERCY MAXIM II - SK

The 72 year old grandson of ARRL co-founder Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW, has died. Hiram Percy Maxim II passed at home in Lyme, Connecticut January 12 after a lengthy battle with prostate cancer.
According to the ARRL, a memorial service was to be held at the Lyme Public Hall on Monday, January 21st. Burial was to be private. (ARRL)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: P3E C-BAND RECEIVER COMPLETED

In ham radio space related news, word that the AMSAT-DL C-Band receiver for the new Phase 3 E ham radio satellite is completed . Its performance is now being tested and evaluated.

The 5.6 GHz receiver was developed by DF7IT. It is housed in a small module which contains a pre-amp, mixer to 10.7 MHz IF, passband filters, and AGC system. (AMSAT)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AO-51 RECOVERED AFTER SOFTWARE CRASH

And some good news regarding the AO-51 ham satellite. Its Command Team successfully recovered the satellite last week after its software crashed. This made necessary a re-upload and re-start of the operating code. AO-51 is currently operational in normal analog VHF and UHF mode
on 145.920 and 435.300 MHz. (AMSAT)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP DEVELOP EAGLEPEDIA

Meantime, AMSAT is looking for two to three individuals interested in helping with AMSAT's EaglePedia. EaglePedia is a Wikipedia-like on-line encyclopedia that will act as the central repository for all information on AMSAT's upcoming Eagle spacecraft and possible future missions.

AMSAT engineers and the general public will be accessing EaglePedia. Because of this the volunteers curators will be responsible for re-organizing the current layout, adding new content, and supporting the AMSAT Engineers as they design, build and organize the project's documentation.

This is a great opportunity to support one of AMSAT's most ambitious projects. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Dave Hartzell, N0TGD, by e-mail to hartzell -at- gmail.com. (AMSAT, N0TGD)

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WORLDBEAT - NETHERLANDS: YOU CANT MAKE RADIOS WITHOUT POWER

Turning to news from around the world, word that a radio manufacturer was recently shut down by a power outage inadvertently caused by the military. It happened in Holland just before the recent Christmas holiday. Amateur Radio Newsline's David Black, KB4KCH, has the rest of the story:

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Audio report only. Hwar it in the MP3 version of this newscast downloadable at www.arnewsline.org

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Late word is that the plant is back on line and doing what it does best. Making radios. (Media Network)

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WORLDBEAT - PORTUGAL: CT JOINS THE D-STAR REVOLUTUION

Portugal has joined the world-wide D-Star revolution. This with word that a new D-Star repeater is now operational near the city of Leiria.

Nuno Santos, CT1EWA, the President of the Associação de Radioamadores do Distrito de Leiria, has announced that CQ0DLR is fully operational on the European R U 58 channel pair. That means its receiving on 430.925 MHz and retransmitting what it hears on 438.525 MHz. This is an input to output spacing of 7.6 MHz which is slowly becoming a sort of unofficial standard in parts of southern Europe for D-Star machines.

Like most other D-Star repeaters, CQ0DLR is connected to the world-wide D-Star Internet gateway. That means it can be connected to from anywhere in the world that there is a user with a D-Star equipped mobile, base or even an H-T.

More information is on the new Portuguese D-Star system is at the A-R-A-L web site. Its U-R-L in this weeks printed Newsline report.

(DO NOT READ: www.qsl.net/ct6arl/index.htm) (D-Star Remailer)

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WORLDBEAT-FRANCE: DRM AND T-DMB SELECTED

France has acted to standardize digital radio broadcasting, but not necessarily in unison with the rest of Europe. Jeff Clark, K8JAC, has more:

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A French government official has signed a decree sanctioning implementation of DRM and T-DMB Audio in VHF band III and L band. This, as the terrestrial digital radio standards to be implemented in that country.

D-R-M stands for Digital Radio Mondiale. T-DMB Audio refers to the South Korea developed Terrestrial Digital Multimedia Broadcasting standard used for video to mobile telephones that is part of the Eurkea-147 family of standards.

The adoption of T-DMB Audio instead of DAB+, which is more spectrum efficient for audio services, was explained by a desire to include images and additional multimedia services alongside digital radio channels.

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No word on when the complete switchover to digital audio broadcasting will take place in France. (RW)

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HAM RADIO IN THE WWW: NEW CYBER SOUTHCARS NET

Back in the United States, Southcars, the South Coast Amateur Radio Service which is a net that operates 365 days a year 7.251 MHz has broadened its operating base. This, to include a VoIP Echolink and IRLP based net for its close to 6500 members.

This new web-based net has been initiated based the need and want to diversify in keeping with the state of technology and the varying interest levels of our membership. Also, the desire to find and support alternate methods for membership participation.

The cyber net is currently scheduled each Saturday at 9 AM EST. All radio amateurs are invited to participate. More information may be found at www.voip.southcars.com. (KY6V)

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ON THE AIR: ARCTIC ACTIVITIES WEEK

The 5th Antarctic Activities Week will take place between February 18th to the 24th. A lot of stations with special callsigns are lining up to participate in this year's event. Read about the details and see the list of stations that will be active at www.waponline.it/Default.aspx?tabid=113 (DXNS)

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DX

In D-X ON5NT, says that his activity from Monaco has to be cancelled because his host has been hospitalized. At airtime, no new date for this operation to take place has been announced.

Lastly, six members of the Texas DX Society plan to operate from San Andres Island, Colombia, from March 1st to the 6th. This will include participation in the ARRL International DX Phone Contest on March 1st and 2nd. W5PF is the QSL Manager.

(From various DX new sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: E-MENTOR HAS ARRIVED

And finally this week, longtime hams in Australia's Victoria state have a new service to assist newcomers to the hobby. It's a program called E-Mentor and Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, is here with the details:

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Members of Australia's Amateur Radio Victoria who have become radio amateurs since November 2005 are now receiving a new membership service which is called e-Mentor. The assistance provided includes

all forms of sharing of skills and knowledge and a helping ham when required. As series of handy tips for newcomers will also be provided to Amateur Radio Victoria members in coming months

I'm Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF.

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E-Mentor seems like an idea that should be expanded, world-wide. (WIA News)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

Please remember to take a moment, visit our website and vote in our latest on-line poll that asks if you got you ham radio dream gift for Christmas. The poll is on the left side of our home page at www.arnewsline.org

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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